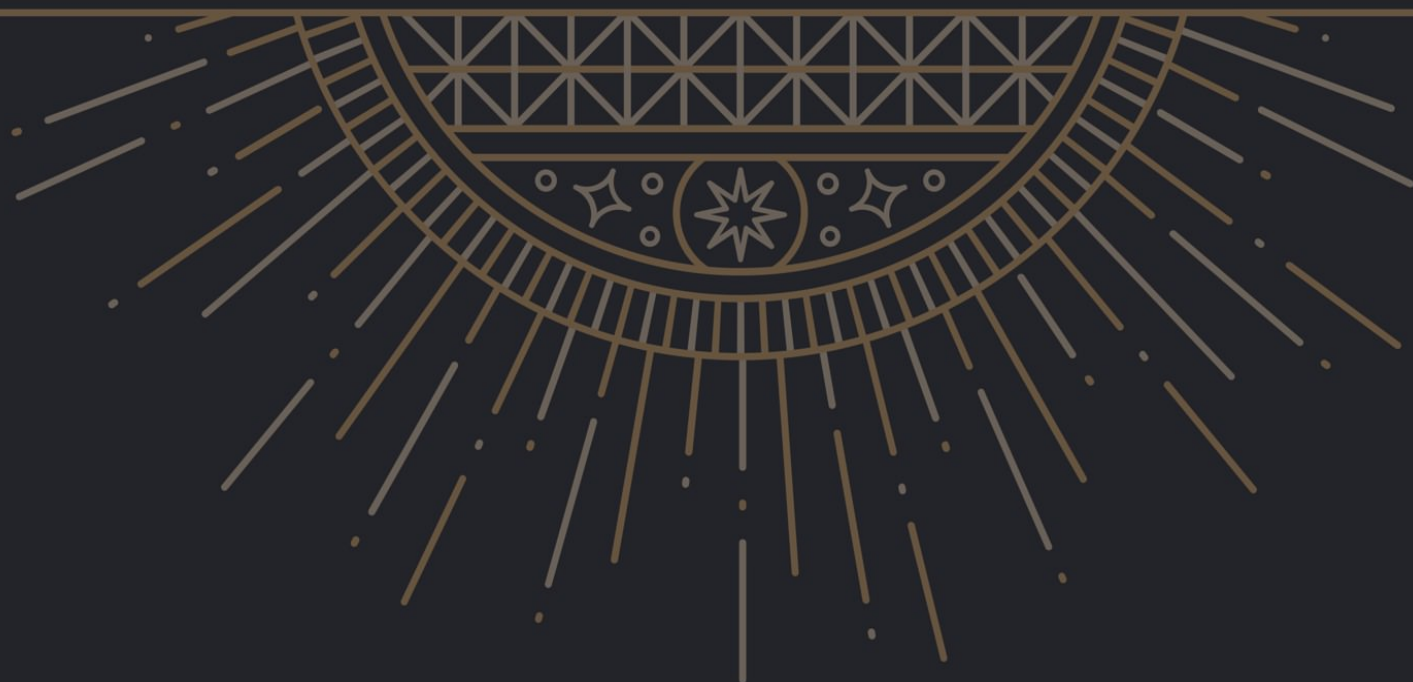




Lazy Dungeon Master



Volume 10 – The Hero Visits

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Volume Ten - The Hero Visits

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Chapter 94 - The Hero Has Come

In preparation for the dungeon's transition phase that should have been going on, the entrance was being guarded. In truth, it was barren.

Be that as it may, only people related to the dungeon would know that. The adventurer guild very seriously constructed a barricade, and while putting a restriction at the dungeon's entrance, conducted an investigation on the dungeon's interior and prepared lookouts at its entrance.

Although there were people being rotated in and out, adventurers with enough skill to deal with any emergencies that may have occurred came to the inn to stay, so I was pretty happy about the income increase.

Well, I'll be watching the entrance today as well with the C-Rank adventurer Gozoh. We're pretty used to each other.

"So what changed... is that jellies are appearing now? Is that even something to worry about?"

"Kehma, even though monsters like jellies are normally left alone, isn't it a pretty big deal that they're suddenly appearing in the dungeon?"

"... Hey Gozoh. Is it alright for me to go and sleep?"

"No way Kehma, you're only C-Rank at this dungeon. If the situation changes, your C-Rank might get canceled. Keep watch properly."

Okay then~. But the tension feels overwhelmingly dull to me since I know what's actually happening. I know that there's no point to being so stressed out about it.

"Come to think of it, what happened to the smithy?"

"Kantara huh? I think he'll have it up and running soon. Those eggshells he got from you are extremely rare materials after all."

"... Ah, that so? I got those things from Haku-san originally though~"

Phoenix eggshells are super fireproof. Since it would've been troublesome if they asked me something like where I got them, I've already turned it into something that Haku-san did. Gozoh also seemed to understand it with, "An A-Rank adventurer... as expected eh."

Ah, we also made an oven entirely out of eggshells for no reason. It has a uselessly good performance, so Kinue-san, a silky girl that loves housework, was delighted about it. She could roast meat to be juicy with just a little of the fire. It looked like it would've burned if she lost focus even once, but she was in high spirits about showing off her skills.

"Hmm, maybe I should make a kitchen knife to go with the fireplace? For Kinue-san's personal use."

"Oh? A present for the light green pretty Nee-chan huh!? I thought for sure that Kehma was only interested in little girls, but looks like you're also properly interested in big ones too! Gahaha!"

That's impolite. I have a foot fetish, but I'm not a lolicon. I do have a foot fetish though. I'm a proper gentlemen that doesn't use the master authority to send stockings. Those three girls' legs are all very delicious—... Ahem. Since they have good shapes to them, it would've become an emergency by now if I weren't a gentleman you know.

"That Nee-chan cooks for the inn... maybe even Kantra'd get fired up about it if it becomes the kitchen knife of a cook that can make such delicious food."

"Maybe. Ah, how much are kitchen knives? Wonder if I could buy one."

"If you brought him an iron golem he'd probably make one with some left over. I'd help out too if you want? It'd be a favor. To be specific, please stock up on alcohol at the inn."

"Why do you want to drink alcohol so much... there're lots of problems with drunkards, I don't want to keep an eye out for them at the inn. Have the guild build a bar."

"Even if they built a bar starting now, I don't know how long it'd take until I could drink. I don't even know how many days it takes to build a bar to begin with ya know."

"Ahh, so you want to have the mage that built the inn overnight to build a bar as well huh. It'd cost a lot of money though."

"... Yeah, he built that extension before anyone noticed didn't he? He's one of [Cave of Desires]' seven mysteries."

What seven mysteries? This is the first time I've heard about that.

"Nn? You didn't know? You're also included, [The Adventurer That Stays

Forever Despite Not Working].”

“Oi, what are the other five?”

“Other than [The Inn’s One-Night Extension] and [The Adventurer That Doesn’t Work], there’s [The Power Spot That an A-Rank Adventurer Likes], [The Little Girl Owner], [The Great Feeling Onsen], oh, and [The Illusory S-Rank Meal] as well as [The Hardworking Golems] I think?”

Aren’t the seven mysteries just everything that has to do with our inn? Rather, isn’t ‘the great feeling onsen’ just a normal impression and not a mystery?

“I mean Kehma, don’t you pay that young owner a lot of nighttime visits? There’s even a rumor going around that that young owner is your sugar momma.”

“Oi, don’t say something so scary, Haku-san would kill me. That’s not a fact at all!”

“Okay? But Kehma, you’re a man too, so doesn’t your desire build up?”

“Sorry, but I specialize in desiring sleep.”

In truth, ever since becoming a dungeon master, I haven’t really had many ero feelings. In particular I guess it’s been since Ichika joined us? Till that point I was having to desperately endure my cravings for Rokuko and Meat’s legs. Well, even now I stare at them though.

Now that I’ve subjugated that appetite as well, I’m sure that I must continue indulging in nothing but laziness.

“Ah, come to think of it, there’s that dog-eared Jou-chan too... so that’s why you’re so carefree?”

“Right, I don’t have to worry about anything since Meat’s there.”

I’m not some pervert that gets excited over a little girl being in front of me. Since Meat stands guard, I won’t do something like become a pervert. So I don’t have to worry.

“Well, isn’t the burden on that dog-eared Jou-chan pretty big though?”

“She pouts when we don’t sleep together, so I don’t think she doesn’t want to.”

“... That so, then it’s fine to sleep with her. Take good care of her yeah?” [1]

“Obviously.”

While having a conversation like that, we continued keeping watch out for monsters that definitely wouldn't appear.

I'm pretty tired even though I've just been sitting on lookout. When our job was over, I went back to my room and immediately fell asleep. That kind of everyday life was repeated for a while.

Then, that finished today. Because we watched for an entire week without anything changing, they came to the conclusion that it should be safe. The restricted admission was also lifted.

"... Haah, with this I can finally take my time sleeping..."

I returned to my room at the inn. Surrendering myself to fatigue, I fell on my futon... Haaah, now to sleep.

Ah, [Cleanup] first... yep, magic is convenient.

"Kehma, I finished making my dungeon!"

"Oooh, can I sleep first?"

"... Between sleep and my dungeon, which is more important!?"

"Sleep... Sleep is!"

"Guh—, you didn't have to say it twice you know!? Hmph, it's alright, I'll show it to you tomorrow. You'll be surprised, definitely!"

Obviously, one of the three major desires of humans, the desire to sleep. Isn't it natural that sleep would be more important?

Sleep! I'm going to sleeeep! Night...

*

The morning of the next day.

Bang! Rokuko vigorously entered through the door to my room.

"Kehma, wake up!"

"Morning? ... Still time to sleep then... guh—"

"Humans wake up in the morning—wait, that's not it! The hero's here, the hero!"

"The hero? ... Yep, understood, I'll get up... Give me another five minutes..."

"Get up already! The hero's coming here, right now he's going to the adventurer guild then will be here right after!"

Rokuko vigorously beat me from over my covers. It doesn't really hurt, but she's noisy.

Guess there's no choice but to get up huh... Looks like the hero's coming.

"Fuaaaah, haaah~, can't be helped. So, the hero huh. Let me see."

I opened the map, looking into the adventurer guild's branch office. When I checked out his DP income... around 1,000 DP per day. Isn't the hero off by a digit there? I want him to stay for a long time despite wanting him to leave as soon as possible. That guy's unfair.

"... So what now?"

"There's nothing for us to do, when he comes to the inn, just do inn work as normal. The usual."

I opened the monitor from the menu that was floating in the air to check out the hero's appearance.

A man with short black hair. He looks Asian, might be Japanese. Summoned to this other world three years ago, he's easily my senior at this... Whatever the case is, since he'd probably figure out that I'm Japanese just by looking at me, the fact I'm Japanese would probably be exposed if he saw me.

"By all means, I don't want to meet him, so I'm going to sleep in my room. You'll probably be fine just treating him like a normal adventurer... just say that we got the meal recipes and the ways to play with the cards from Haku-san after she'd heard about them from previous heroes, with Kinue-san preparing the food. That's it, time to sleep. Rokuko, I'll leave the rest to you."

"U-understood. Basically as usual, right? Leave it to me!"

Rokuko left the room in a hurry... Good, time to go back to sleep. Then, just as I started dozing back to sleep in my futon, Rokuko once again ran into my room with a bang.

"Kehma, it's an emergency! The hero wants to lodge in the suite! And wants the A-Rank meal too!"

"... The suite was supposed to be for Haku-san's personal use, but well there's no reason for the inn to refuse him if he can pay the fees... As for the kid's meal... Yeah, well it's fine. Just serve it as normal."

"Understood, but is it fine if we don't eat together? That's a limited service for

Haku Ane-sama.”

“Nn, yeah~. Well, I’m not going to meet the hero since I’ll be sleeping in my room.”

Making sure that Rokuko left the room, I laid down on my bed again. Then, just as I started to doze off in my futon, Rokuko yet again burst into my room with an even bigger bang.

“I-it’s an emergency, Kehma!”

“Oi, the door. Oi. You broke my door by kicking it. Now I have to fix it.”

“You can just fix it immediately anyway!”

“I can huh... so, what’s up? Did it turn into a situation you couldn’t deal with without me?”

When I asked Rokuko that as I left my futon to fix the door, Rokuko’s face blushed red as she recalled it. While looking down at her inner thighs—while looking down restlessly, she spoke.

“The hero... p-p-p-p-p-proposed to me! W-what should I do, Kehma!?”

... What?

Chapter 95 - Extra: Hero's PoV

“So this is [Cave of Desires] huh...”

Wataru Nishimi. Nishimi was the hero summoned by the String territory of the Raverio Empire three years ago.

For the three years after that up until just the other day, he thought that he was summoned to defeat the demon king, with Count Brie String having him trained in hopes of that as well.

However, Wataru's existence in the country was found out.

After somehow performing some meritorious deed, Count String thought he would be able to make an excuse... of course, this was because he summoned the hero to the country without permission.

As befitting of the term 'hero', his existence was unconditionally recognized as an S-Rank by the adventurer guild.

The person that attempted to conceal him as his own personal property, Brie String, was convicted.

Speaking in terms of modern Japan, it would have been like privately developing a missile to arm yourself, obviously violating the Gun and Sword Control Law.

It wouldn't end there if you considered that that weapon could be used on whole countries as well, turning into something closer to national treason.

... Well, Wataru also agreed that Count String was in the wrong.

In truth, the count desired political power, saying things like, 'Only I am suitable for being emperor!' For another more concrete example, when he introduced himself to Wataru with, 'How do you do, oh hero? I am the future

emperor, Brie String. For now I am still a count, however.’ There were various things wrong with that.

In the first place, what kind of secret plan could turn the current family head’s rank of count into that of an emperor? He wasn’t even part of the emperor’s lineage either, so he’d probably have to go with a coup d’etat.

In the end, the count was convicted by the actual emperor. As for Wataru, he was protected by Haku Raverio, who was said to be something like the emperor’s ancestor.

By her awfully long-lived family coupled with her beauty, Haku was rumored to be a high elf. She had already abdicated the position of emperor to her descendant, voluntarily saying that she would live a life of retirement in her imperial villa. Then again, just her body holding a beauty that hadn’t changed in the least since back when the Raverio Empire was founded demanded respect. Moreover, her being the active A-Rank adventurer [White Winged Goddess] made her an outrageous existence.

By being protected by Haku, Wataru publicly became the Raverio Empire’s hero.

After that, Wataru resigned from the String Chivalric Order that he had joined for training purposes, instead joining the Raverio Empire. With his formal position still under consideration, he was currently being treated as one of Haku’s imperial knights.

Why had that hero come to [Cave of Desires]?

An item that some merchant had brought to the imperial capital, playing cards.

Those cards were made with high quality paper that was clearly different than commonly circulated paper, as well as all of them being perfectly printed on.

The moment Wataru had seen the playing cards, he couldn’t help but start to remember his previous world that he had already started to forget—Japan. Moreover, the strangest thing could be found on the playing cards’ boxes... there were bar codes. Something this world did not have, something nostalgic that he dearly missed.

Naturally, this world’s inhabitants would only recognize them as a pattern, while Japanese would definitely make the connection to Japan.

It looked as though it were definitely arranged.

When he informed Haku about the location and his reason for going there, it turned out that it was her [Favorite] place to go incognito. Haku told him about it probably being the source of the playing cards.

She didn't really have a reason to stop him. She just allowed him to go, as well preparing a carriage for him to use.

Then, after around half a month of swaying back and forth in the carriage, Wataru finally arrived at [Cave of Desires].

"... This is the place, huh?"

There was a poor adventurer guild branch office and an inn.
(When I'd asked before, I heard that there was supposed to be a blacksmith's shop a little away, but I can't see it.)

Wataru immediately headed towards the inn... however, he thought better of it and decided that he should first give his greetings to the guild, so he quickly headed to the guild to give a quick hello and—he was completely detained, having to accept tea.

(... S-Ranks are serious business huh, it was nothing like this a little ago when I was a C-Rank.)

Wataru grumbled to himself.

Then, he headed to the inn once again.

"W-wel, come—"

Immediately as he entered, a small girl in a dress greeted him.

"W-welcome to [Dancing Doll's Pavilion] tooooooway, I'm Rokuko the owner."

She spoke with a ferocious vigor. However, she flubbed her words a bit.
... Unconsciously, he calmed down. A smile filled Wataru's face.
However, for some reason, Wataru was simply unable to look away from Rokuko.

"Guest? I-is there anything you need?"

"Eh—, ah, sorry. I am Wataru Nishimi. Ummm, Haku-sama recommended the suite to me. And she said the meals here are incredibly delicious."

"Eeeh!? Yesh—! P-pwease wait a moment! Ah, there's a chair over there!"

Saying that, Rokuko dashed inside for a moment. She didn't seem to be using

keigo, but Wataru decided to not worry about it since her tone was already fairly disordered. [1]

When he entered the inn... faintly, he felt that it smelled like Japan.

(There's something here... after all.)

He thought back on the previous three years. Various things had happened... He wondered if his comrades from the String Chivalric Order were doing well... as he recollected, he stopped midway since he also remembered a trauma together with it.

Rokuko had also just returned... as before, she was still anxious for some reason.

"It's this way."

Rokuko called out to him with half-cooked keigo.

... Before him, both blonde hair and an adorable bottom swayed back and forth. Even if he understood that he wasn't being seduced, he couldn't help but wonder. It may have been her youthfulness or maybe its shape, but he couldn't take his eyes off her bottom. It was strange, as this had never happened to him before. While feeling slightly nostalgic, his heart thumped in his chest.

(I want to caress her—w-what am I thinking about right now!? She's a child!)

"Guest?"

"Ah, no, i-it's nothing!"

"Ah, uh, this is the suite. Ah, here, the key."

"... Thank you."

He finally realized that it looked as though she'd guided him all the way to the suite. Accepting the key from the owner, he looked into the room.

Windowpanes, wallpaper, furniture... they were all good. Although it felt as though he'd seen the design somewhere before, it felt weird to be something of this world.

However, there was a massage chair placed directly in the center of the room. Moreover, it vibrated when you put money into the fee box. It obviously stood out as strange.

"... It's not attached to an electrical outlet or anything?"

“Ah, guest. When would you like your meal? It’s time for breakfast right now—ah, you haven’t bought a meal ticket yet... ah but maybe you wanted to order it from the suite?”

He understood that she hadn’t practiced serving customers that well at all. However, opposite of feeling it was shoddy, Wataru found it pleasant.

“Hmm, then how about recommend me something? I’d heard even the bread here is delicious.”

“A recommendation? Then I recommend the [Melon Ro—not that. Our white bread is famous for its deliciousness.”

Melon rolls. Just now, Rokuko made an obvious verbal slip. Wataru had also heard it properly.

“... Rokuko-chan huh. Who are you?”

“I-I’m the owner of this inn you know?”

Though Rokuko averted her gaze, Wataru managed to guess to some degree. Haku’s favorite. The fact that Haku recommended this inn. Then, the style of the inn. Thinking about all of these things and mixing them together to get his result, Wataru spoke—

“... Would you be my partner?”

“Eh, no way.”

Immediately shot down.

Chapter 96 - The Hero and a Meal

With him proposing to Rokuko, he'll probably be executed immediately if he manages to return alive. Well, I'm not really worried about him but as expected I'd feel sorry for abandoning someone from the same world as me. I feel like doing a good thing so let's just continue on with the campaign.

"... So, what do you think we should do, Kehma?"

"For the time being, tell me how he asked."

"Eh? Nnn, umm, 'would you be my partner'."

Rokuko's face is blushing from embarrassment... but is that even a proposal? Partner can have various meanings after all. Though it could definitely mean a partnership between a man and a woman, it could also mean partners like me and Rokuko.

Even I use [Partner] to describe Rokuko a lot.

... Ah, there's a chance that Translation-san is replacing what I mean with that unthinkable meaning isn't there...

"Heeey, Rokuko, did you answer him about the 'partner' thing?"

"Yeah, well I refused immediately though! I have Kehma so I don't need another partner."

"Y-yeah. Then isn't the problem solved with that?"

"Wait up! Umm, that's... he's really persistent... He invited me wanting to talk and I don't want to eat together with him. You come too, Kehma!"

An S-Rank adventurer's request huh... Wouldn't it usually be fine if I just refused?

No, it might turn into a bad situation if we don't talk to him at all, so eating a

meal with him might be a good opportunity.

And if Rokuko talked with him by herself, yep, I definitely have a bad feeling about that. There's the possibility that she's already guilty of something, after all what did she do to make him ask her to become his partner?

"So I was thinking about properly requesting you to be there, as my partner!"

"Yeah? Yeah... I guess?"

"Hey, do it right! Kehma is my partner after all."

"That's right, I'm your partner, yeah."

Crap. With this course of events, what kind of meaning is this 'partner'? I can't figure it out.

... The problem is that I'm trying to not be seen. Postponing my problems, it really is a Japanese thing to do huh.

Ah, maybe I could ask the hero about it directly?

*

In the end, I decided to talk directly with the hero. While eating a meal together.

We're in the suite. Right now, Kinue-san is in the middle of setting up the A-Rank special, the [Avarice Meal], also known as the kid's meal.

And as for me, I was sitting in front of the hero with the mysterious earth mage adventurer Narikin disguise. Rokuko was next to me.

Furthermore, in order for today's disguise to conceal my hair color as well, it's closer to a full-face helmet than a mask. I made the mouth area able to be detached for the meal. It'll be convenient to hide my hair color in the future as well, so let's go with this from now on.

"Good to meet you, Hero-dono. I am Narikin. Rokuko's partner. It is my honor to be able to meet you."

"Good to meet you. I am Wataru Nishimi... umm, Narikin-san. Rokuko-san. It was very impolite for me to invite you, but—it's impossible to talk with this meal in front of me, I'm very sorry.

You could talk while eating though... you can be a bit loose with the kid's meal~. Well, I thought something like that, but it looked like that was out of the question for the hero. He's been fixedly staring at the kid's meal and cream

soda for a while now.

Maybe I shouldn't have served the hero a meal meant for children after all? The hero probably knows how much the kid's meal costs in Japan, I'm expecting him to call it a rip-off at five gold any time now.

Then, the hero single-mindedly ate the kid's meal. Moreover, with a serious face the whole time.

... He looks like an adult, but with him silently eating a kid's meal, the atmosphere's pretty heavy.

In the end, he was angry about the price being too high—not. I thought he might be, but it didn't look like that was the case.

“—Thank you for the meal.” [1]

Drinking the last drop of the cream soda, the hero, Wataru, who hadn't left a single grain of food left on his plate—shed tears.

“I'm sorry, I just recalled my hometown... it's already impossible to return there.”

Three years. I'm sure Haku-san said that three years have passed since this hero was summoned.

Entering into high school, that would be the same period of three years it would take to graduate. With that amount of time, various things probably happened. I don't know what happened, but from the way he looks right now, it's easy to see that he's gained a grand amount of experience compared with what he would have living in Japan.

“You can't return anymore, is it?”

“Yeah. My hometown is in a different world, so there's no way to return. I'm still looking for a way, but—even if I find one, I still wouldn't be able to return there... Since coming to this world, my hands have killed many. In my hometown, that is the greatest sin.”

I see, so he's killed people since coming to this world. So he can't return to Japan, huh.

Murders in another world probably wouldn't get him arrested as a criminal if he returned to Japan though, but the problem is probably how he feels about it.

“So then, why are you looking for a means to return despite not being able

to?”

“Ah, in the future, I might meet a person from the other world that might want to return to their hometown—because of that; and lingering attachments. One’s hometown is something to be missed...”

... For me, even though I don’t feel like leaving my comfortable life here to return to Japan, I wonder if I’d want to return some day? I’m happy so long as I can sleep though.

“I understand the reason Haku-sama recommended this inn. This place really does have a hint of Japan. I have a few questions I’d like to ask, is that alright?”

“... If I am able to answer, I will answer.”

“Then... [Rice]. What region is this from?”

Ah—a difficult question right out of the gate.

For example, even if I said, ‘I don’t know since we procured it from Haku-san,’ this hero could go and directly ask Haku-san to confirm it. Then if Haku-san answered with, ‘I don’t know where,’ or something there’d be a contradiction. It’d be really bad if that happened huh.

“... Well, we don’t want to leak our supplier since this is a business...”

“Please, somehow. I won’t tell anyone else. I absolutely want to acquire it.”

“If that’s the case, I can accommodate you. We don’t have so much, but we can sell you the rice that has finished cleaning.”

“Definitely! —Ah, and what kind of soil does it need?”

He didn’t bite. Well, rice is the Japanese soul food, it’s natural for him to be anxious about it.

He’ll probably keep asking if I don’t answer him. Let’s go with using that appropriate country’s name and be a bit enigmatic... Ummm, what was the name of that country Haku-san definitely mentioned? Wakoku? You could get cherries there right? Alright, let’s go with using that.

It looked like Wataru expected me to hesitate and think over responding, he was waiting quietly.

“Do you know of the country named Wakoku?”

“Yeah, I’m planning to go there. [Wakoku], its name matches it being to the east, so it’s been on my mind.” [2]

... Ah, he's right! I didn't notice!

"Well, Haku-san brought us things called cherries from there."

"Ooh, so there are cherry trees in Wakuko then! I can't wait!"

Ah, is that so? Cherries are cherries, so I guess that means cherry trees too. So if there really might be [Rice] too—wait, Haku-san said she didn't know what [Rice] was didn't she? I don't think Haku-san would overlook a grain while knowing about a fruit like cherries. In that case, it looks like there isn't much of a chance then.

... Yep, I didn't say that I got our [Rice] from there, safe, safe. Even those lie detecting magic tools wouldn't catch my white lie.

"As for our current supplier, that's all I can say."

"Thank you... Next, I would like you to have a look at this."

After saying that, Wataru took out some playing cards.

"I heard that these could be obtained from the dungeon [Cave of Desires]."

"Yes, it appears that they are obtained from the first floor. We buy them for five copper coins."

"... Narikin-san, please look at this."

The hero pointed to the box of cards... What? What am I looking at? It's just the normal box.

"Yeah? ... It doesn't look like anything's different, are you trying to show me a magic trick?"

"Hey, what's that weird pattern?"

The hero smiled broadly. I suddenly understood after hearing Rokuko's response, and immediately my blood flowed backwards as I was attacked by chills.

... It's a bar code. With something like that, it's a complete out!

"Yes. This here is called a bar code, it's a special way of writing a price."

"Ahh now that you mention it, this pattern, I've always thought it was something or another, but it was like that then?"

I promptly handed it back... This guy, he might suspect me being Japanese. He might have even settled on that with my reaction just now.

Oh right. Haku-san's surely heard about bar codes as well. So with her thinking that I had schemed some super-excellent plan, she probably saw the bar codes as bait. Even though it was really just a complete fail on my part!

"... Well, this is why I came to this dungeon. It's a clue for returning to my hometown."

"Is that so... Ah, it's fine to examine it, but since this one is more or less for beginners... please don't damage it too much, alright?"

"Yes. I understand. I am planning on staying a week for now."

Hero Wataru said that and bowed deeply... he doesn't seem like a bad guy. Ah. Right. I need to ask about his proposal towards Rokuko too huh. Well, nine times out of ten he probably meant it as a study partner though.

Chapter 97 - The Hero and a Story

“Well, come to think of it... you proposed to Rokuko or something?”

Bu—!? Wataru looked like he was punched in the gut.

“Y-yeah, no, w-well, I did. She rejected me... But I won’t give up. I will absolutely persuade her.”

“Rokuko is Haku-san’s beloved imouto, she’ll erase you if you lay a hand on her you know?”

“It’s fine, I’ll respect the person herself’s wishes.”

If it’s about respecting her wishes, I just want to tell him to give up already.

“Rokuko is already my partner though.”

“Oh, she still doesn’t seem to have a ring though, have you still not given her one?”

... Ring?

“So there is a custom of giving a ring to your partner in the place Hero-sama comes from? We come from deep in the mountains, so we don’t have that kind of a custom.”

“Ah, then should the present be from me? I’ll send it to her later if she tells me her finger size you know?”

“Ha ha ha, it’s an important present for my partner, I’ll somehow handle it myself.”

When I took a brief glance at Rokuko, she was smiling with her cheeks blushing. Oi, isn’t this course of events bad?

The conversation is progressing, but which meaning of [Partner] is it?

Ring, perhaps... is it the meaning related to marriage?

“Right, for a partner... so it goes on the ring finger?”

“Yeah, the ring finger.”

Oi, what do you mean by ring finger? Is it the engagement ring or wedding ring after all?

I should have properly asked what [Partner]’s meaning was. I’m so bad at ad lib.

“Well, even so, I won’t give up.”

“No, please give up... Rather, why Rokuko? You’re the hero, surely you’re popular?”

“There are a lot of circumstances...”

Wataru looked down and began to tell his story.

*

It all started three years ago. Summoned to this world, Wataru Nishimi was trained as a hero, joined a chivalric order, and lived a militaristic life.

Wataru, who had been set up as a hero, was just seventeen years old at the time, a high school student. He liked games, so he aspired to be a hero.

[Defeat the Demon King]—with that slogan in mind, Hero Wataru hunted monsters to acquire strength.

And then on a certain day. The chivalric order was assigned to exterminate thieves—his first murder.

He was overcome by intense guilt.

Even if he knew that others would die if he didn’t kill them, even if he had almost lost himself in the killing with his fellow knights, he couldn’t evade that feeling of killing a person. As a Japanese, it was impossible for Wataru to rid himself of that feeling.

Wataru shut himself in his room.

He neglected his training for many days, unable to move due to the crushing weight of remorse.

Just when Wataru thought it wouldn’t be so bad if he would just die as well, the door to his room was kicked open and he was forcibly dragged out.

[Idiot—! If Wataru died... what would I do!]

The one to save Wataru by a hair's breadth was his chivalric order comrade, Plume.

Plume devotedly attended Wataru, hearing his story. He spoke about a lot of Japanese things. He spoke about a lot of trivial things. For all of it, Plume listened to him. She never denied Wataru. She accepted it all with a smile. Then, he was gradually charmed by Plume—and confessed.

[Un, if you're fine with me.]

Getting the OK, Wataru was ecstatic. Merrily, he struggled to store enough funds to marry Plume and accepted difficult commissions from the guild. —To live with Plume in this world, he hardened his resolve.

[... Eeeh, no way. He doesn't have what it takes to be a leader—]
[—Ha ha, right? Wataru's a weakling. Let's go on to my room.]

Then, he saw Plume and another leader go into the same room together.

... Even after that, Plume stayed with Wataru with an unchanging smile. What he saw was probably an illusion or something, that's what he told himself. Wataru started to forget about it. And then, that time came. Count String was arrested, and the chance came.

[... Plume... isn't here?]
[Oi! There's a note in her room!]

The message went like this: [Sorry☆ The count was arrested so I escaped! Everyone, stay healthy♪ Plume Zan]. The count was arrested—so she escaped. He couldn't understand how those actions were related. However, it was immediately cleared up.

[Oi, don't go entering my Plume's room because of the emergency!]
[Hah? What're you saying. Plume is my Plume!]
[Wait wait wait, everyone be quiet, Plume and I are planning on marrying you know?]
[I am! I am Plume's fiance!]

Those were all remarks from separate men.

And all of their savings had disappeared. After they looked around, they realized that everything with jewels were taken away.

... Plum was an assassin sent in by the count in order to ensnare the hero—an international fugitive marriage impostor.

Furthermore, somehow, Wataru's savings disappeared as well. As well as his mementos brought from Japan.—Most of all, even though he was able to buy some of it back from pawn shops nearby—Plume, the most important thing, couldn't be found.

[Plume was... was... a criminal? But surely there were reasons—]
[Come to think of it, the marriage impostor Plume Zan is... a man. To begin with, women aren't allowed into the String Chivalric Order.]

What was that? All of his hopes were smashed into pieces.

*

“... That is what happened.”

“T-that's, well, my condolences.”

Somehow or another, he's went through a sublime experience huh. I didn't say it though.

To deceive those guys and their leader, that's... well, let's stop there. It's nothing but me guessing on my own.

“So then, what relation does Plume-san have to your proposal with Rokuko?”

“No, love at first sight needs no reasons.”

It had nothing to do with it!?

“Aaah no! It's not that it's unrelated, umm, love at first sight, I mean, I value my instincts.”

“... Is that all?”

“Yes, that's all.”

Then why did you have me listen to a story about your past? What a roundabout hero.

“... However, if Rokuko-san is that important to you, you should want to show her proof of that.”

“Huh? Proof?”

“That’s right. If you showed her proof of it, then I’ll probably have to give up.”

... Yep, I don’t really get what he’s saying, but I can understand a little.

“In other words, isn’t it fine if I just kiss Rokuko here?”

“Hyahi!? W-wait, hold on! No no, there’s no way, it’s impossible!”

Rokuko refused with a blushing face, waving her hands back and forth super fast.

Oi, the hero’ll have no choice but to take advantage of that if you deny it. Well, I’d probably be executed by Haku-san if I actually kissed her though.

“Hahaha, it seems that’s impossible for Rokuko-san. So then, it looks like I still have a chance.

“No no, Rokuko is just shy after all. Although it looks like this, we are partners in mind and body.

I responded to Hero Wataru’s cheerful remark.

“Well then, let’s do it like this... I fell in love with her on sight. Please let me confirm whether or not you can protect Rokuko-san. Right, if it’s an adventurer that’s superior to me, I’ll be able to entrust Rokuko-san to them with peace of mind.”

“Hahaha, surely you’re joking. A condition of being an adventurer that surpasses an S-Rank like yourself, isn’t that a little unreasonable?”

“Don’t worry. I was still a C-Rank before they made me S-Rank.”

Oi, did that count put some pressure on them? Haku-san would definitely find out if the adventurer guild made him a high rank... Looks like the count’s maneuvering was in vain as well.

“Well, that’s how it is. So then let’s have a match. By using that to probe—ah, not that, aren’t you excited?”

Wataru corrected himself, standing up trying to pretend it didn’t happen.

“A match with Rokuko-san on the line, Narikin!”

“I’ll decline.”

I answered immediately.

Chapter 98 - The Hero and [Still Refused]

“... A match with Rokuko-san on the line, Narikin-san!”

“I’ll decline.”

Even if he says it a second time, something useless is still useless.

“Why!?”

“There’s no merit to go along with it is there? Going along with your story earlier, this is just for your own broken heart and I can’t see it as being anything else other than an [Inconvenience to Others] you know?”

“Uguh—! Even so!”

“It’s fine, this match, you should accept it.”

Rokuko, why are you so eager about it?

“Still though, there needs to be some merit for us if we win right, Hero-sama?”

“Eh, ah, ummm, yeah... Well, if Narikin-san wins I’ll keep the thing about him being Japanese a secret? How about that?”

“... Hey, didn’t it just sound like you said I’m Japanese?”

“Am I wrong?”

No, you’re right. Although you’re right, I won’t admit to it. Even if I said otherwise, there are lie detecting magic tools and magic, so it wouldn’t be any different from a confession. All I can do is avoid that from happening.

“For argument’s sake, let’s assume that I’m Japanese. Why would I be troubled if you spoke about it?”

“You’d clearly be troubled by it, aren’t you hiding your face? If not, show me that your face isn’t a fellow Japanese’s.”

“I just have an ugly wound that I don’t want people to see, it’s nothing like

that... Aren't you prying into it a little to far?"

"I-I was being impolite! I didn't realize!"

And so, Wataru apologized and bowed obediently. This guy really is honest.

"Well, this inn definitely was built by Narikin-san, and even your name being [Narikin (Upstart)] matched coming to prominence as an adventurer.... I thought for sure that was it."

Almost, but that's not it. It has to do with the shogi piece. My real name is [Keima (Knight)], so I flipped the piece over to become [Narikin (Promoted Knight)]. Obviously I didn't say any of that though. [1]

"So it was something like that huh? My name is... well, that's just by chance. Looking at it with Hero-sama's point of it, it is likely a strange name. And for this inn, I built it while referring to an inn a Hero-sama has built in the old days. And then, I decided to place it here at this dungeon [Cave of Desires] that produces unusual and rare magic tools. Like that [Massage Chair]."

"Hahaha, so that was it... Is it fine if I dismantle it? I could purchase it..."

"I gave our spare one to Haku-san, so please abandon your wish."

"Mumumu, I'll find one in the cave..."

Well whether or not you find one depends on luck. Not. It depends on whether or not I make one. For now.

I

"... Well, right. If we win, I want a magic tool—one that can see through lies. With that I will consider accepting the match."

I can get the 50,000 DP if I just turn the fifty gold coins into DP. The suite is twenty-five gold coins per night, and he's saying two nights. I'll get it soon, I want to see what kind of thing it really is.

If I can confirm whether or not he can get it easily—well, that's enough of a result.

"Ah, t-that's, umm, even though I've heard about magic tools like that... sorry. I don't have one. Magic tools like that are compulsorily bought by the country you know?"

"Even if Hero-sama is an S-Rank?"

"... Ah—! Right, there might be a chance now that I'm S-Rank...! Ah no, wouldn't

I need Haku-sama's permission... ah, ah, but then it might sound like getting permission for Rokuko-san... umm, is there anything else you want if I can't?"

Well, there's no problem with me getting anything since I'm a dungeon master.

But that guy's really honest.

"What'll you do? Accept?"

"By the way, what would you do if we lost?"

"... Umm, please forgive my approach to Rokuko-san."

Ah, he's modest. I definitely thought he'd say something like, 'I'm taking Rokuko-san!'

"Well, so long as you respect Rokuko's will."

"Yeah, I will... Rokuko-san is still small, but I feel like she's already a lady."

Hero Wataru took a fleeting glance at Rokuko. She was blushing like before... yep, she's all excited over being called a lady. But really? Are you sure?

"Well, I won't accept the match. After all, I still have no reason to accept it."

"Really? Disappointing..."

He said that, but he didn't seem that disappointed... He's probably planning something.

I had a few suspicions, but the day ended without incident.

... For now, let's pretend that Narikin left to go and stock up on things. For about a week. That way I won't have to have any more confusing conversations.

Chapter 99 - The Hero and Kehma

Then, three days had passed.

In these three days, we'd gotten around 4,500 DP from Hero Wataru. In addition, three day's worth of inn fees, seventy-five gold coins. And twenty-five gold coins in meal fees... Uhuahaha! Uhuahahaha!

Ah, the amount Rokuko and I ate on the first day when the hero invited us was a treat from him, ten gold coins.

By the way, a sandwich is served for breakfast as a service.

However, the suite is amazing, it's easy money whenever Haku-san comes over. Even without her tips to Rokuko, we're getting DP directly as well. For some reason, when Haku-san is there our income from her is 0 DP per day.

"Hey Kehma, when will you give me that ring? I want it."

"Nn, ring? What are you talking about?"

"You forgot!? ... H-hey, the partner thing."

"Ahh, ahh, that one. I remember, I remember. Yep. So, what kind do you want? Gold, silver, decorated?"

"Whatever Kehma thinks suits me is good!"

So she's basically saying she'll leave it to me, that's the number one most troubling thing... well, it's fine. It's a present.

Rokuko has fair skin and blonde hair, so maybe something bright red? Roses or something would suit her. Making a ring with jewels... ahh no, maybe I should worry about how intense it feels? Should I look for some fantasy metals? Though orichalcum and stuff is really expensive in DP, the amount needed to make a ring probably wouldn't be that much.

“It’ll probably take a little time, is that alright?”

“Yeah, umm, un, I’ll look forward to it!”

Rokuko left the room, squirming a little.

Did she have to use the toilet? No, that can’t be it, she doesn’t need to use it.

By the way, when I asked Ichika what [Partner] meant, it seems that it means [Companion]. Though partner also has the feeling of being related to marriage, it seems adventurers that are close also use the word partner. I’m told that they give each other matching accessories (not always rings).

So Rokuko was just jumping to conclusions about him proposing to her huh... no well, the hero himself confirmed it.

... Yep, it’s that. It’s not my self-conceit, Rokuko, isn’t it that she fell in love with me?

I had no inkling there was that kind of element going on at all though. If so, I really feel bad about it. I like Rokuko’s cute legs.

But if for argument’s sake I touched her—ah, I immediately felt Haku-san’s blood lust. My imagination is too strong.

[No, this is today’s results too. Please look, playing cards! Two boxes!]

[Oh my, that’s amazing. By the way, what kind of magic does Hero-san use?]

Nerune was talking with the hero at reception.

The hero hadn’t tried to make a pass at Rokuko since then. Even if he saw Rokuko in the inn by chance, he would just raise his hand and give her a simple greeting.

Hmm, what’s that guy scheming? I’m so bothered by it I can’t sleep.... grah. That guy’s disturbing my quiet sleep.

[So, will you eat the A-Rank meal today as well?]

[Hmm, it’s a bit much to eat the same meal after three days in a row, so let’s go with something else today. The B-Rank meal.]

[Would you like me to bring it to your room?]

[No, it’s fine. I want to eat in the dining room today. I’m also quite homesick over the system of buying food with meal tickets after all.]

Because of that, it doesn’t look like he’ll be having the A-Rank meal today. Unfortunate.

Well, even so it's still one gold coin. He's wantonly spending gold coins, but well, S-Rank adventurers probably have a huge income... I wouldn't go so far as to risk my life for money though. If I can live as a good-for-nothing sleeper, that's good.

*

While I was taking a catnap before I went to sleep, Rokuko came in eating pudding.

"Kehma, the hero is looking for Kehma you know?"

"... Not Narikin?"

For some reason, I'm getting a bad feeling.

I mean, right now I should only be acquainted to him as Narikin. Why's he looking for me?

"Un, he's looking for Kehma. For some reason, he was talking with Meat."

"Uwaaah sounds bothersome... can't you say I'm not here?"

"No, the usual adventurers are in high spirits saying things like: [If it's him, that guy's always sleeping in the inn] or [Kehma? Ah, that sloth] or [That boss huh, isn't he the most informed about the dungeon?] Introduced like that, it's probably impossible."

And after that, she said everyone was treated to pudding. His generosity unsealed the adventurers' mouths.

Tch, he was prepared.

Or rather, why's he talking with Meat...? Ah, could it be 'that'? After falling for Rokuko, now he's in love after seeing Meat?

"... It can't be helped, he's calling me huh... Is he in his room?"

"He's waiting in the dining room."

It feels like he wants to talk in public on purpose.

"... He tried to take Meat to his room, but Meat didn't want to so he's waiting there."

"Well, it's not in his character for that hero to forcibly bring her to his room... However, he tried to bring Meat into his room, huh?"

I woke up a little and went to the dining room.

If possible, I didn't want to meet the hero looking like this. Well, it's probably fine already.

In the first place, meeting him as Narikin was just a wait-and-see. My true identity shouldn't have been exposed, but I have a bit of an expectation.

When I entered the dining room, Meat immediately came and hugged me. The surrounding gazes focused on me.

"Goshujin-sama."

"Yeah, it's alright, it's alright. What happened?"

"~♪"

When I pat Meat on the head, her tail and ears wiggled in delight. It calmed me down. Alright, let's go back to my room and sleep.

"... Are you Kehma-san?"

The hero stopped me. C'mon, read the air.

"I am, but you are?"

"Wataru Nishimi... I wanted to talk about that girl, however, my intention changed."

Judging from Wataru's line of sight, he was probably looking at my hair. ... Now then, is me being Narikin leaked? My voice isn't even different.

"It would be a little hard to speak here, could you come to my room?"

"Sure, is it fine if Meat comes as well?"

"... Err, well, yeah."

Hero Wataru was a little flustered. For now, I brought Meat along to the suite. Some of the onlookers were curious but I just ignored them. Something like having a conversation with the hero, doesn't this look like an event where he talks with a minor character?

On the way, Wataru spoke to me.

"... Are you Narikin-san?"

"Nope. I'm Kehma."

"Isn't your voice the same!? Even though you said that you were leaving to restock!"

"Didn't Narikin say that he had a scar on his face? Do I look like I have

something like that?”

“Ah—, you really don’t... wait, no, I didn’t confirm that with my own eyes though!?”

Tch. He didn’t fall for it huh.

“You! You’re Japanese after all!?”

“My parents were Japanese, so I know a lot of things about Japan. It’s not like I know everything though.”

“... Oh, so that’s it?”

He’s obviously sad about it. I didn’t say that I’m not Japanese though. Then, we reached his room.

“So, what did you want to talk about?”

“Umm, I asked you on the way here, but... that Ojou-san too, are her parents Japanese? She has black hair. With dog ears though.”

“I don’t know since I just picked Meat up. So, Meat?”

“... I can’t remember anything about my past. However, I’d be happy if it’s the same as Goshujin-sama.”

Good girl. I stroked Meat’s head.

“... So, you’re Japanese after all, Nakarin-san.”

“I’m not Nakarin, I’m Kehma.”

“Then Kehma-san... do you know the meaning behind [Meat]’s name?”

Nn? [Meat]’s meaning? It’s a general-use name for slaves. When I asked Meat, she said she wasn’t embarrassed as Meat and would work hard.

I asked Ichika to make sure, but it seems there’s a huge range of slang for it, so while it can mean [Pet] and [Hug Pillow], for adventurers in particular it also seems to mean things like [Meat Shield, [Meat Wall], [Bait], and [Decoy].

Those meanings imply disposable too, it doesn’t look like it means something that good. I asked Meat if she wanted to change her name, but she didn’t want to change it since it was the first name I gave her, so she told me that it wasn’t a problem and would work hard to suit her name.

... Well, I didn’t intend to throw her away you know? She’s my important hug pillow.

My profession is dungeon master so there’s no problem with having a bad

reputation. That being the case, I just let it as is since she herself wanted to keep it.

“I know, but is there some problem?”

“Heeh... so you know about the name?”

Boom!

He hit the table and it broke.

In an instant. The table was built to be very solid, but it broke with two lines originating right where Wataru’s fist hit it. It looked like the letter [V] breaking it.

It’s a bit late, but I started sweating a bit. Why, why did you suddenly attack the table!?

As I thought that, Wataru’s face also looked like, ‘Ah crap.’ Moreover, Meat took position in front of me while wielding the golem knife as to protect me, glaring at the hero.

This child, so cool.

“... I didn’t mean to hit it that hard... I will pay for it. However, aren’t you ashamed for using such a small child as a shield!?”

“... Including the trouble fees, five hundred gold.”

“Eh!? Ah, wai—, uhh, can you take it in parts?”

To my idle grumble of a sentence, Wataru lost his composure. Alright, five hundred gold coins GET!

“Ahem... I didn’t think that you were a person to touch such a small child! I will not leave Rokuko-san to you! Do not approach Haku-sama’s imouto!”

Eh, touch? What’s he saying? Is he thinking that [Slave = Ero Things]? Is his head filled with pink?

“Lolicons that I know say YES loli NO touch and would absolutely never touch a child, it held that meaning among men...!”

Don’t tell me that! ... Ah, but I definitely am ‘touching’ her. As a hug pillow though.

“Goshujin-sama, do I defeat him?”

“Stop. He’s a hero.”

And Meat was going at her own pace. Rather, it felt like she was planning on winning against him.

She’s become splendid.

Chapter 100 - The Hero and a Match(Gambling)

Well back on topic, there's no choice but to do something about the hero who'd lost his temper.

"Even so, I heard that Hero-sama attempted to bring Meat to his room though?"

"Eh!? No no, doesn't that sound weird!? I just wanted to hear her story since she had black hair."

"Really... it sounds suspicious... there's a rumor that the hero proposed to a little girl."

"T-there's a reason for... no, it's nothing."

Nn? So there was a reason?

... ..

Perhaps, did Haku-san tell him to feel around and investigate the relationship between me and Rokuko?

That'd explain his slightly strained conduct. That he confessed so calmly, that he said he wouldn't leave Rokuko here, and that he broke my table.

Right, this hero was under Haku-san's control. It just doesn't look like it. He's probably here to find a reason to bring Rokuko to the imperial capital. Her reception... well, I can picture Haku-san rolling out the red carpet. With a house of sweets, making an entire room out of melon rolls with melon rolls filling the room.

And since I have to see the hero off safely due to my promise with Haku-san, I can't afford to start a fight with him. Was his training for this purpose?

Alright, let's repel him. However, not by injuring him.

"Understood. Then shall we have a match?"

“Huh? A match? ... A match!”

Hero Wataru took the bait.

“As you wish, I accept! Well, naturally not a fight to the death, the plaza in front of the cave seems like a good place, what time? I’m good immediately after this though.”

“Wait wait wait. There’s no way that I would challenge Hero-sama in a fight of combat prowess, this. This.”

I showed him a die. A generic six-sided die.

“A six-sided die... A TRPG!? No way, there are rule books too!?”

“I don’t understand what you’re saying, your thoughts are skipping around too much.”

Tabletop role-playing game, TRPG for short. There’s no way that exists in this world.

... Well, when it comes to amusement, maybe I should go and popularize it?

“It’s ordinary gambling. We’ll prepare equal amount of chips and victory will be decided by struggling for them. Towers and dice, cee-lo, even cho-han are fine. Do you know the rules?” [1]

“... A while back, I read about them in manga. I don’t know towers and dice though.”

“You roll the dice, taking the amount of chips that there are pips on the faces. You do this three times back to back, with the person with the most chips in the end winning. It’s that kind of thing. In short, roll them three times, the person with the highest total of pips wins.”

“It’s easy to understand. Sounds good.”

“Then, are you fine with using this for the match?”

“Yes.”

Wataru nodded. He appeared strangely self-confident.

“What will we do about dice? Use the ones prepared by the inn?”

“No, I’ve obtained some myself. I went to some lengths to get them after all.”

Wataru took some dice out from his luggage. Probably spoils he picked up from our dungeon.

“Then, let’s let these decide our victory or defeat. Lie detecting magic tools if I win... ah, right. And five hundred additional gold.”

“Then I will take Rokuko-san to the imperial capital if I win. And that child as well.”

When he said ‘that child’ and nominated her, Meat glared at the hero. Her eyes were saying that she’d absolutely never follow him.

Don’t worry, I won’t let him take you. And as for Rokuko—

“Oi oi, I can’t bet my employer at my own convenience. She’s different from my slave.”

“Ueh!? W-what about her being your partner?”

“Huh? I think you’re confusing me with someone else.”

To the last, I’ll be obstinate in saying that I’m a different person than Narikin. To begin with, I can’t make her the bet’s wager!

“You just accepted the match, you can’t back out now.”

“Eeeh—!? T-then umm, uhh... that child, and reducing the table reimbursement...”

“... Well that’s fine. I don’t know how Meat is worth five hundred gold though.”

And of course, what we were using were the crystal-type dice golems made by me, the trick dice.

*

“And so it’s my win. Thank you for the five hundred gold.”

Competing for the one hundred chips, I won after this and that.

... But the hero has some strong luck, always rolling fives and sixes in the three rolls. What level of trick was that? I examined the dice midway, but it was just that he kept throwing fours, fives, and sixes.

Even so, sometimes I won, sometimes I lost, purposely repeating this over and over. Losing a little, winning a lot, until I took away all of his chips.

“Well, you were close.”

“... O-one more time!”

“Ehh, can’t be helped~. Then I’ll double down and go for one thousand. I’m fine taking installments if you can’t afford it you know?”

“Guh—... no, please wait a moment... I have a bad feeling about it, let’s go with mutually betting one hundred gold each.”

“Understood, one hundred gold.”

*

“Ah~. I lost. And it was a pretty big loss~. Unfortunately, I lost one hundred of the gold coins so you only need to pay nine hundred gold coins now. Congratulations!”

“Y-yeah.”

Struggling for the hundred chips a second time, somehow or another it was my overwhelming defeat.

... As before, the hero always rolled fives and sixes in his three dice rolls. He really might be doing some kind of trick. This time, I only won one or two times so it was a major loss for me.

“Well our match should be satisfied with this, how about let’s stop?”

“No! Please wait. I’ll definitely save that child next time!”

“Eh? Then are you fine wagering fourteen hundred gold coins? She still has a gold debt so I don’t want to get rid of her.”

“It’s fine, let’s do it!”

*

I started to feel sorry for him so let’s forgive him with this.

“Well then, you need to pay a total of twenty-three hundred gold coins.”

“... .. Umm, didn’t you cheat!? I don’t know how but wasn’t that obvious cheating!?”

Hero Wataru is falsely accusing me.

“Why do you think I cheated? You supplied the dice and we both properly examined them.”

“What percent chance do you think there is for ones and sixes to mutually appear all three times!?”

“I’m sure that Hero-sama always got five or above twice the previous times, what chances were that? If you think about it, you might understand my hand as well?” [2]

“... I have the unique skill [Super Luck: Lv 1] that I received from Kami-sama... to surpass that... ah—, are you a summoned Japanese after all!?”

So Hero Wataru had a skill like that huh... I wouldn't have won honestly huh. Rather, as expected of a hero to have such a cheat skill other than Translation-san. Bad Luck-san taught me about his hand even though I didn't ask for it. [3]

“It's limited to only when I'm protecting comrades. To the extent that it's stronger than yours.”

“S-so there was that kind of mechanism.”

I tried to say something with a deep meaning. Whaaat, I didn't fix my victory when I didn't wager Meat earlier, so I'm not wrong.

“And weeeell, that's enough, no more. You understand?”

“... ... Excuse me, as expected, twenty-three hundred gold coins is a bit...”

“Pay it properly. You decided to wager it yourself.”

For him to be seventeen when he was summoned, he should be twenty years old now. He's an adult by Japanese standards, so let's have him pay it punctually... Seeing how that would be two billion three hundred million yen, how many lifetimes will it take? Well, an S-Rank Adventurer-sama could probably earn enough to pay it off if they persevered.

“I'm fine with installments. Pay it off with one hundred gold a month for a year and eleven months. You'll be able to pay it back before two years are over. Easy, right?”

“Ueeeh... if I weren't an S-Rank that would be an unreasonably absurd and huge payment plan...”

“Then I'll pardon the interest out of consideration of Haku-san. I won't even say something like to become a slave for collateral, so be thankful.”

“... Yes, thank you very much...”

I don't know how much S-Rank adventurers can earn in a month, but he just said it'd be unreasonable if he weren't an S-Rank right? I'll believe you, Hero-sama.

Writing up a contract as well to make sure, he would pay me one hundred gold coins per month for twenty-three months. Do your best with the S-Rank commissions that pay huge sums. If you want, I'm sure Haku-san could

introduce you work that pays quite a lot!

“Ah, come to think of it I didn’t include the nuisance fees.”

The hero’s eyes teared up.

Chapter 101 - The Hero and Meat

Maybe two billion three hundred million yen is too much after all? I thought that while collecting the chips and dice placed on top of the table, but I decided it was fine after all when I saw the table he'd destroyed. ... It's troublesome even using [Create Golem] to mend it, it has decoration, and its strength is a problem too.

"However, that means Kehma-san thinks of her as a comrade, so why did you name her [Meat]?"

Hero Wataru asked with a curious look.

"It was at her own request. It was the name she'd had when I picked her up."
"But even so, that name has such an obscene meaning..."
"Nn? At worst doesn't it just mean [Meat Shield] or [Meat Wall]? That's what I was told at least."

When I said that, the hero struck his palm with a fist, making a small clap sound.

"Aaah... I see, I thought something was off. That's normally for male adventurers. This child, since she's so small, it's seen as an absolutely different meaning you know? Well, the slang is really different depending on the region though..."

Fumu? That so?

"Then I want to confirm, what does [Meat] mean?"
"Goshujin-sama, [Meat] means tool. Mainly as wall or shield."

Meat answered even though I asked the hero. Yep, I'll ask Ichika later too.

"... .. Ah, umm... even though that's not wrong... But that's when it's applied to men, for women it's usually—"

"Wa—! Wa—! You hero—! If you, to Goshujin-sama—! I'll be your opponent —!"

Meat with the interception! The hero is shot down! Hey, oi!

"Meat? Could you quiet down for a moment?"

"... .."

Meat slumped forward, looking as though she lost her energy.

It's the first time I've heard Meat use that loud of a voice. In other words, Meat knows the meaning that the hero is trying to say. And that it looks like she doesn't want me to know it.

"Hey... perhaps, is the meaning really bad?"

"It's not a mistake to say it meanstool either. However, with a sexual meaning attached to it."

... I looked at Meat.

As for her, she was showing her usual expression, but her complexion had reddened, and while tearing up, trembled as though she were ashamed. Why did you want to keep the name if it was that shameful!?

"So, that meaning is generally the most famous. Of course, the sexual meaning."

"Oi, Meat?"

This time, Meat trembled with a start, paling.

"Meat, go to my room with Ichika. We have some talking to do."

"Y-yes."

Meat seemed to be considerably afraid with her ears and tail lacking any energy as she went to get Ichika.

Seeing it all happen, the hero asked me timidly.

"... Umm, what are you planning on doing?"

"I'll definitely scold them. And have them write written apologies, and punish

them.”

“Ah, that’s really gentle. I’m relieved you didn’t say something like you’d kill or sell them.”

There’s no way I could do something like that. Meat and Ichika are both indispensable existences for the dungeon.

Well, I should probably make their punishment more or less severe, but I don’t want to interfere with their schedules.

“Yeah. And maybe you should give her a new name.”

“Maybe.”

Though I said that, it’s a name that she persisted in keeping the meaning of from me, her Goshujin-sama. I don’t know why she would want to, but she likes it. It’s troublesome for me to change Meat’s name at this point too, but... I don’t intend to use her as a [Sex Tool] either...

Aaah it’s already getting annoying. Maybe I could give her a proper family name? Then I could just call her with that in front of people.

For now, I have the hero owing me the huge debt of twenty-three hundred gold coins. Me being Japanese? I kept avoiding his suspicions and successfully left the hero’s room.

For that broken table, let’s have a maid golem move it later. Maybe I’ll give it to Kinue-san?

*

Then, when I returned to my room, there were two people below my line of sight. Yep, Meat and Ichika were dogeza’ing.

The two are doing beautiful dogezas.

“S-sorry, Goshujin-sama...”

“I’m soooo soooooorry~~~~!!!”

“Alright, how about you guys raise your heads? For now let’s hear why you guys did something like that.”

Even when I said that, Meat kept her head down. It couldn’t be helped so I decided to hear about it from Ichika, who raised her head while desperately forcing a smile.

“Well it’s~, un. I knew [Meat]’s meanin’. I knew it. But, it’s a bad meanin’ to say. Hey, you wanna make a woman say somethin’ like that? It’s embarrassin’ yah? Umm, I was also called [Meat] where I was before~”

“However, couldn’t you have pointed it out?”

“... I mean I thought Goshujin-sama would’ve guessed it y’know? Hey, ya bring Meat-senpai in every day... I thought ya definitely would’ve known the meanin’.”

Uu,that’s my bad.I’m just using her as a hug pillow, but I definitely bring her into my room.

After that, Meat looked up timidly and answered.

“... Goshujin-sama definitely hasn’t made a mistake. That’s why, I’ll do my best as Meat, and...”

“Then why did you try to keep the hero from telling me what [Meat] means?”

“... Huh? W-why...?”

Meat answered it with that; it looked like she seriously didn’t know. It looks like even she doesn’t know why she didn’t want him to. It feels like a child lying to cover up their mistake.

Wait... I forgot since she’s able to do just about everything, but Meat is still a child.

“Aah, right. It’s probably that, a beastkin’s instincts. Beastkin value their names a lot, she may’ve thought it’d be bad if he said somethin’. And that ya’d throw her away if it got exposed, so her body moved immediately, or somethin’?”

“Ah, so that was the reason.”

With Ichika’s explanation, I agreed.

... I didn’t intend to be hostile about it, so it’s probably fine. I’dgo into shock if she bore a grudge against me because of this. I don’t have the courage to use someone with that as a hug pillow.

“First of all, I don’t plan on abandoning you. Keep working hard, the same as always.”

When I said that while stroking Meat’s head, she looked a little relieved.

“It’s alright. After all, I’m human. I don’t know what I don’t know, I can make

mistakes too. Say something if you notice. Alright?”

“... Yes.”

“Got it. Then next time I’ll say it without holdin’ it back.”

“Then I’ll forgive it this time... I’m still punishing you both though.”

It’s that. Compulsory loose socks OR knee-highs should be fine. Of course, those socks will be prohibited from having [Cleanup] used on them for two, no three days. Furthermore, loafers while they’re working. Let’s let them use sneakers when they’re doing physical training.

Kukuku, this is a tremendous punishment if I do say so myself. Only fellow comrades (foot fetishists) will understand how tremendous it is though.

And well for around a month, compulsory stepping massages and a ban on gambling. And the quality of their meals will drop to this world’s standard, that should work.

Chapter 102 - Extra: The Hero and Gozoh

Wataru Nishimi was a hero.

However, even to a hero, a debt of twenty-three hundred gold coins is a bit... no, is fairly... no, is really painful.

And because of that, he stopped using the suite, as well as lowered the rank of his meals.

Although inn fees were provided by Haku, he decided that to set it aside for the payments since it couldn't be helped.

Wataru moved into a normal room, but it wasn't particularly troubling either. Rather, the futon was considerably comfortable. He felt that it'd be fine even if he just stayed in one of them from the start next time he came.

Moreover, he could enter the onsen however many times he wanted, as well as use the game room.

He'd want to come and stay at the onsen inn even if there weren't a dungeon.

"... But this debt is horrible huh... haah..."

Wataru sighed while eating cream stew in the dining room.

"Oh? What's wrong, Pudding An-chan?"

"Ah, thanks... umm, Dwarf-san?"

"It's Gozoh. Thanks for the pudding yesterday. So, what's with the sighing?"

"Ah, I'm Wataru. And well, it's just... I have a bit of a debt."

Wataru gave a small laugh as though to lie to himself.

"Haah, so that's it? Something serious happened right after that yesterday huh. After you brought Kehma to the room? What happened?"

"Well, it was just something with this.

Saying that, he showed him the dice.

“I was just a little self-confident.”

“Be careful, gambling can destroy your body you know? That receptionist, that Ichika girl? She fell into slavery after accumulating debt from gambling. She looks pretty happy now though... actually, today it looks like she’s seeing the end of the world for some reason.”

“Ahaha, I’ll take care.”

Wataru smiled wryly, figuring that her name sounded familiar, and it that was probably because of her punishment.

“Let’s see, in debt to Kehma? I haven’t seen that guy gambling at all, but... between you and me, my relations with Kehma are good. I could tell him you need to wait a little to pay if you need.”

“Haha, thank you for that... Kehma-san said that my installments will be interest free, so well it’s alright.”

“Ah is that so? It’s all good then.”

While saying that, Gozoh drank another swig of alcohol from his clay decanter.

“Wait, is that alcohol? I heard that this inn didn’t deal in alcohol though?”

“Yeah, I brought it. I traded for it directly with a merchant, they overlook it since I just bring in what I buy for myself... Want to drink some? You gave me that pudding yesterday.”

“Itadakimasu.”

To tell the truth, Wataru hadn’t drank alcohol before. Summoned to this world at the age of seventeen, he continued with his Japanese customs even here and didn’t drink or use tobacco until the age of twenty. And now that he thought about it, he was already twenty. Though he was already at the age he could drink, there hadn’t been any chances.

Wataru accepted the clay decanter from Gozoh and suddenly drank it.

... The alcohol had an amazingly intense flavor. However, Wataru didn’t think he disliked that.

“Hooh, you’re a good drinker.”

“That’s the first time I drank alcohol, but I think I like it.”

“First time? Fumu, then you’re a natural. Well, drink up, I have others.”

“... Then I'll accept your offer. Itadakimasu.”

“Aye, you should drink alcohol even if something bad happens.”

Gozoh took out another clay decanter he brought in with him and drank as well.

While the two were drinking, Gozoh's companion, Roppu, came along. Although Gozoh was a dwarf, Roppu was a human woman.

“Oh, you're drinking! And you, I haven't seen your face, Newcomer-san?”

“Ah, I'm Wataru Nishimi. A hero.”

“Heeh, you were a hero huh.”

“Hero!? Isn't that S-Rank? Eeh, amazing, wait you were drinking with him without knowing that? ... Let me in!”

And so, Roppu began drinking alcohol with them.

Luckily or not, no one stopped them.

“Eeeh, twenty three hundred!? You racked up a huge amount.”

“Ye~ah~. Kehma-san, he's a demon! A devil! Kehma-san is!”

“Oi oi, that's rude. A demon or devil would've let him go with around fifty gold!”

“Uu, half a year of hard work...”

“Eeh, you can pay it? S-Rank is amazing~”

“I could get it in a single month if I got serious though! I won't do it since it'd cause a grudge though.”

“Riiight, it's better to stop before causing one of those~. Well, drink up, drink up. Today's on me!”

“Itadakimaaasu!”

Wataru continued drinking whatever alcohol Gozoh took out.

“Hey heeeey, Wataru-kun. What did you do to Kehma-san? I don't think twenty-three hundred gold is normal.”

“Weeeell, it was a bit of a misunderstanding... you know that dog eared child serving tables here yesterday? That child.”

“Yeah, that Jou-chan huh... Wataru did something bad then?”

“Hahaha, yeah... thinking that tiny girl was having a hard time... didn't I have to save her if I could? As a man.”

“Wooaah~, Wataru-kun is cool~... but it’s useless you know? Slaves are a person’s property. And besides, that child’s madly in love with Kehma-san, she’s not dissatisfied with her current position at all!”

“Looks like it huh... haaah, doing something unnecessary for a twenty-three hundred gold coin debt... twenty-three million rion huh...” [1]

“Alright, drink up. Today’s my treat, there’s still alcohol!”

“Itadakimaaaasu!”

He left it all to Gozoh and drank the alcohol Gozoh took out with vigor. With a burp, he sat the clay decanter he’d emptied onto the table.

“Hey Gozoh, it’s not too early to go to Kantra’s place you know? He said there’s still alcohol at the smithy’s spot you know? And it’s fine even if we make more noise there you know?”

“Oooh, right, Roppu, you’re a genius! Oooi, Kinue-san, bring some snacks! Drink this Wataru, follow me!”

“I’m coming, Gozoh-san!”

“Ah, Kinue-san. The bill. Can you bring it?”

“Yes, certainly. I’ll have Rei bring it all. Are deep-fried potatoes alright?”

“I want those soft and flaky fried things!”

In this way, they hit it off with Wataru spewing his complaints. However, as for them becoming comrades that would travel the world under the name of [Team Bacchus], that is a story for another day. [2]

Furthermore, [Team Bacchus]’ main directive was to [Drink All of the Delicious Alcohol From Around the World].

*

“Mmm~, so alcohol was such a delicious thing~”

The next day, Wataru woke up feeling refreshed, not even having a hangover. He didn’t know if it was in his original nature, or perhaps because of a hero’s abilities. However, he was able to enjoy alcohol without needing to worry about how he’d feel the next day. That would be good to do from then on.

Since he’d planned on going to the dungeon [Cave of Desires] today, he would have had to change his plans if he’d had a hangover.

And since he’d need to leave soon, this might be the final day that he could

properly look through the dungeon.

So he intended to go as far in as he could today.

“... Guess it’s time?”

Wataru, equipped with his skills as a hero, went into the dungeon.

Chapter 103 - The Hero and the Dungeon

Hero Wataru dove into the dungeon. Passing through the first floor with ease, he entered the labyrinth area.

Although the usual pattern for here was to search and explore, today he passed through the labyrinth area farther inside, making his way to the riddle area.

“Now then, the unexplored area’s after this huh... Gotta focus from here on.”

He wasn’t speaking to anyone in particular, he just talked while looking at the door in front of him.

The riddle door. Wataru leisurely solved the door, typical known as the [Gate of Wisdom].

“... Yeah, this is arithmetic. Just need to solve it with some basic algebra.”

“I remember this from that Japanese game show, that matchstick guy. Just need to reverse the triangle.” [1]

“Aah, this one’s a famous riddle. In this world, at least. [Northern Sea].”

“... [Easy], I guess? This doesn’t seem that hard.”

Expressing an opinion that would earn him a headbutt if Haku heard him, he made his way to the spiral staircase area.

Beyond this point, nothing had been reported to the guild at all.

Although Wataru thought that Kehma probably had some information as the person who had delved the deepest into the dungeon, it would’ve been hard for him to ask due to his debt.

As something that gave one an advantage, information in this world was to be

concealed. And that if he'd asked for information, his debt would continue increasing.

Of course, that included information on how to deal with parts of a dungeon. As an exception, information about traps that would be particularly dangerous for adventurers who didn't know about them—placing the magic sword back into the pedestal in the [Avarice Trap] for example—would be purchased by the guild to be used as common knowledge. As for the adventurers who still died to those traps, the guild just viewed them as unfortunate losses.

“... So there's a hole in the middle? Wonder if it'd be faster to jump down from here?”

He thought that when he saw the hole... but seeing as he'd likely wind up with fractures even if he landed skillfully, although the idea crossed his mind, Wataru discarded the thought of jumping down.

While paying careful attention to the steps, he descended the spiral staircase step by step.

... On the way down, a wall projected outwards.

“Whoops, that was dangerous.”

For Wataru, it wasn't dangerous. He evaded the suddenly projected wall so as to not fall.

“I probably would've fell if I was any slower huh.”

He finally noticed the point of there being a hole down the center of the staircase. Then again, there wasn't much meaning in him realizing it either though.

When he finished descending the spiral staircase, as though there was something divided from where he was, there was an area that strikingly resembled man-made ruins.

He entered the near room while confirming that there were no traps.

“Oh, a treasure chest! Fufufu, I wonder what's in it? Maybe it's some manga magazine~”

Wataru, someone from another world, hoped there would be some Japanese item inside the chest. However, it just had a sword in it. Although he was a little

disappointed, he saw a magic stone in it when he took a better look. It was a magic sword.

“Ooh, come to think of it there was some talk about being able to get magic swords here huh. Hmm, it feels like I can fill it with magical power and it feels like it’ll get sharper, I think? Well, it’ll go towards repaying my debt... Would’ve preferred something from Japan though...”

Magic swords that improved their sharpness were, among magic swords, located in the lower rank. High rank ones had magic effects. In the case of the magic sword he currently had, by being at the level of being purchasable with several gold coins, it was a third-rate piece of equipment for an S-Rank adventurer hero.

As for C-Ranks, they would go into a frenzy for equipment at that level.

While defeating the iron golems that constantly appeared on his way, he found even more magic swords in the other rooms. All of them were sharpness improving magic swords. Although he stored the magic swords together with the iron golem corpses with his [Storage] magic, he was slowly reaching his full capacity.

“Maybe it would’ve been better to come after getting rid of some stuff... No no, I had to perfectly prepare since I’m travelling alone, can’t be helped, can’t be helped.”

Collecting twenty magic swords somehow or another, he found the stairway to continue going down.

Although he felt that it was [Still Safe], he didn’t think that he [Still Had Room]. When the time comes, he’d probably discard the iron golem corpses for room.

Thinking that, Wataru decided to take a look at the next floor for now.

*

I’ve been going a little easy on him, but doesn’t it feel like he’s progressing just a bit too easily through the dungeon?

However, I can’t use my never-before-seen lethal traps on him because Haku-san asked me to keep him alive. We’re only able to repel him with monsters, but we’re just losing out since he’s so strong. How the heck is he slicing my iron golems in two with simple strikes of his sword, oi.

Because of that, we adopted the strategy of giving him a ton of treasures so that he'd hurry up and leave.

"There's a lot of magic swords today aren't there?"

"Yeah. Since someone finally made it to the warehouse area, let's use the opportunity for some advertisement."

If it's the level of magic swords we're showing off this time, high-ranking adventurers probably won't come.

"The iron golem corpses are slowly filling up his [Storage]... wait, eh? Did I make a passage there?"

When I looked to see how Wataru was doing, he was working on going down stairs that I don't remember making... That isn't the prison area, right? The heck are those stairs?

"Eh? I made those you know... wait, right! I forgot since the hero arrived, but I made a dungeon!"

Oh right, I completely forgot about that. Come to think of it, Rokuko did make a dungeon, didn't she.

"... So, what kind of dungeon did you make?"

"Fufun, well, take a look! It's super ground-breaking! Please see what I made, it won't lose to Kehma's ideas!"

That sounds good, let's watch this hero's strategy for capturing it.

*

"... Hey, it's suddenly way different."

When he descended the stairs, there was a pool of magma. The heat that gathered seemed to burn his skin.

In the sea of magma, there was a path dotted by stepping stones to be used as footholds. Even magic tool footwear would burnt up if someone lost their footing.

"There was that hot spring, so maybe this is something like a volcano... A natural sauna, I guess?"

In truth, this couldn't be a sauna. The magma was hot enough to melt even

bone, but it wasn't much of a threat to Wataru, a hero. Using his magical power, he produced a barrier that stretched around him like a membrane. With that, even if the stepping stones collapsed and he was submerged in lava, it should last around thirty seconds.

Even so, since it consumed so much magical power, he slowly advanced, checking his footing step by step.

"Piii—!"

"Hm?"

He heard a bird's cry. When he looked, he saw a small white bird flying towards him like a dart. With a bang, he took out his sword to stop it, causing it to clang as it got hit. Knocking against his solid sword, the bird fell into the magma with a plop.

"What kind of bird was that?"

Though he was a little worried about it, the small bird that fell into the magma was already on fire.

While not minding it too much, he just noticed there weren't any golems on this floor. He looked around him once again, searching for the presence of monsters.

Anyhow, he didn't feel the presence of any other than that small bird that would've gone great in yakitori. However, it was true that he wouldn't be able to notice golems that were completely unmoving.

"... Guess I'll go on?"

Then, when Wataru moved his foot, something hit his back and he received a light impact.

"Uoooh!? ... T-that was dangerous!"

He almost lost his footing, but he held out. Looking around, he saw the small and still-burning bird flapping its wings.

"A fire bird... phoenix! Right, it wasn't because of the magma, it was on fire from the start!"

"Pi!"

The small bird hurled itself forward once again.... although it was a phoenix, for surprise attacks, they stopped working once they were figured out. While thinking he saw something rare, Wataru cut down the phoenix.

“Pikya—!”

The phoenix cried as it was cut down, wrapping itself in flame... However, a few seconds later, the phoenix revived and attacked him again. Reviving faster than he thought it would, Wataru cut it down yet again.

However, again and again and again, the phoenix kept reviving and attacking him.

Even though it was very weak, its revival cooldown time was quick, so it looked like there was no point in attempting to defeat it, however—

“Ah! But couldn’t it become some great raw materials!? Come to think of it, Kantra-san said that he wanted rare fire-type materials huh! Booyah!”

“Pikiii!?”

—Probably because it felt something dangerous, the phoenix ran from Wataru.

“My my, saved from cleverness.”

Wataru let out a small mutter. As a matter of fact, he didn’t know how to retrieve the raw materials from a phoenix that would just burn away the moment it dies, so he wouldn’t have been able to do much either way.

Deciding to come back and examine it next time, he put the thought in the corner of his mind and decided to continue advancing onward.

On the way, a foothold suddenly collapsed, but he somehow or another managed to make it to the interior. There, there was a door.

When he threw his body’s strength against it, the door opened and he saw a cave filled with heat like what he’d just went through.

Although its magma didn’t overflow, he was able to see red lizards and magma slimes appear.

Apparently, the real thing started here.

Chapter 104 - The Hero and[Flame Cavern]

I was troubled.

“What? This is ground breaking!”

“Isn’t it too remarkable though, like an explosion?”

“Why!?”

The dungeon that Rokuko made was the footholds made on the magma sea. However, that by itself wouldn’t be a problem. Added to that, even adding the one monster, Feni the phoenix, it was still alright.

The problem came after that.

That is, it connected to something out of our dungeon—[Flame Cavern]. Probably around its fifteenth floor.

“... Why is it connected to [Flame Cavern]!?”

“It’s convenient to let Feni go out and play you know? I properly asked Redra about it first you know?”

“At least you got permission.”

Then again, they probably would have noticed and said something if she didn’t get permission.

“... So why is Feni the only monster?”

“Because that floor is for Feni. And this way I save more DP to use on summoning a dragon for the next floor!”

Somehow or another it looks like Rokuko’s dungeon is for her pet’s private

use... I guess that's fine?

Just then, a message came from Ontentoo saying he wanted to meet. I have a bad feeling about it, but it's not like I won't go. Grah.

"Alright Rokuko. Are you ready to apologize?"

"In that case I'll dogene! I'll prepare the futon!"

That's no good, Rokuko. Don't do something like that so quickly.

*

"Oi, Kehmaaaa!? What's the meaning of this!?"

When we met, the salamander Ontentoo shouted with a forceful bellow. His reptilian face looks like its glaring at me harshly.

"I feel like I understand what you want to say, but for now let's assume I don't... What do you mean?"

"You sent the god's vanguard into my dungeon, that's what! Is this a declaration of war!? Answer me!"

"It was an accident. Sorry."

"Oh, it was an accident? That's fine then."

Are you sure? Oi.

"I know I'm the one saying it, but is it alright?"

"Huh? Yeah, it's fine, the god's vanguard is moving towards the exit right now."
[1]

As the hero himself intended to advance further and further into the depths of the dungeon, it looked like he was heading towards [Flame Cavern]'s entrance, which was its exit. Ontentoo seemed to be letting him go outside as is and just ignore the boss room.

"Kehma and No. 112 are narrow-minded huuuh. Right, Redra?"

"No, Rokuko!? It's dangerous even for this one fighting all out against god's vanguard as an opponent you know!?"

In addition, Rokuko and the red dragon Redra (human form) were sitting on good terms with each other in seiza on the stone floor. No, they were made to. By me.

“Kehma? What were you thinking by connecting to my dungeon?”

“Please ask Rokuko. Or rather, it looks like you didn’t approve it either, Ontentoo?”

“Redra did it without my permission... Comrades in hardships eh?”

Although the reason is that I left it all to Rokuko, Ontentoo couldn’t defy Redra who was his master. Thinking about that, Ontentoo must have a hard time.

Even with their dungeon of fifty-one floors, it looks like the dungeon master redecorated in secret and he only just now realized it when the hero invaded.

“This one discussed wanting to connect dungeons with Rokuko!”

“It’s convenient for bringing Feni along to play right? Also for me playing with Redra!”

“... Rather, Rokuko, Redra. When did you two get on such good terms?”

“When Kehma was sleeping.”

“Rokuko and Feni come over to play a lot! This one has free time since adventurers usually don’t make it to the bottom floor!”

Yeah, it is a fifty-one floor dungeon after all... I could probably sleep peacefully for life if I made ours that deep. I sleep a lot even now though.

“Rather Kehma! You care for Rokuko properly! Learn from this one’s husband!”

“Yeah yeah! ... Wait, Redra!? Don’t say it as if I-I’m like Kehma’s w-w-wife—!”

For now, no comment.

“So, what now?”

“Ah, well, how about blocking the door?”

“Hmm? Isn’t it fine to leave it? It’s camouflaged on a rock surface on our side so it’ll just be guys coming from your side.”

Hmm? So in other words it’ll just be a thing that adventurers that came in from our side can leave through?

“In other words, the guys that get lost at your dungeon will get dealt with somehow by us, how ’bout some thanks?”

“Hahaha, then isn’t that just us losing income? Ours is also camouflaged, I just decided to get rid of that unmanageable god’s vanguard guy, thanks for that~. I

might send god's vanguard there again though!"

While mutually giving feints, for now we decided to just keep our dungeons connected and camouflage the opening.

And we decided on Rokuko and Redra's punishments.

*

Hero Wataru looked about restlessly.

"... .. Light...? Huh, the exit? Huh?"

Continuing walking outside of the dungeon, he looked around.

Apparently, he was at the top of Tsuia Mountain. Sia was a little ways away, and he saw the inn near [Cave of Desires], [Dancing Doll's Pavilion]. There was a forest between him and it, and he still had to descend as well, but it was possible to return more or less easily with a hero's leg strength.

"It doesn't look like an illusion. Is this really the outside...? The heck is going on, was there another entrance? Should I return for a moment and report it to the guild...?"

With that, he walked down the mountain towards the inn. Running down the mountain's face, he instantly knew the direction to go.

Coming out of the forest that was between them, he returned from above to [Cave of Desires].

Right then, Gozoh was drinking alcohol in Kantra's smithy.

"He's still drinking?"

While a little astonished, Wataru decided to join in afterwards.

"Oh? If it isn't Wataru. Didn't you head into the dungeon? Why'd you come from on the mountain?"

"Ah, Gozoh-san. There's... an entrance on top of the mountain."

"On the summit? ... You said you were an S-Rank, but that place is definitely a dungeon called [Flame Cavern] you know?"

"[Flame Cavern]? Is it different from [Cave of Desires]?"

"It should be a different dungeon, but... well, there are lots of things about dungeons I don't know, so it might be something unusual."

“Are there no precedents?”

“No, there’re examples of fellow dungeons being near each other. A famous example is the imperial capital’s [White Labyrinth], the [White Cave] is nearby it and touches a part of it.”

Hearing about it from Gozoh, Wataru remembered hearing about something like that.

“How far’d you get in there?”

“Ah, into the unexplored area. I don’t know when it [Flame Cavern] started though...”

“Ooh, that’s amazing! As expected of S-Rank! ... Was there any alcohol?”

“Unfortunately not. Ah, but I did get magic swords.”

“Hooh, I’m envious.”

“Come to think of it, didn’t Kantra-san say he was studying magic swords? How about I give him one? I got twenty of them.”

“Twenty!? That’s insane! Oooi, Kantra! Wataru is going to give you a magic sword! Today we’ll drink as thanks!”

“Ooh, drinking alcohol today too!”

Many gulps echoed from Wataru’s throat.

Chapter 105 - The Hero's Repatriation

After reporting to the guild, he decided to sell all of the magic swords through the guild to pay off his debt.

“—Because of that, I appear to have left from [Flame Cavern]. Well, here are some magic swords. There are nineteen of them, I had one more of them at the same quality, but I gifted it to Kantra-san. I would like to sell the rest through the guild.”

“... Yes, certainly.”

With the magic swords lined up, the contents of Wataru's report were exhilarating.

That he had went through the unexplored area, that [Cave of Desires] was connected to [Flame Cavern]—a dungeon also in Tsuia Mountain—at an unknown location, and that he had retrieved as many as twenty magic swords. They were all wonderful results.

“Well, how much will you purchase the information for?”

“The market price for that is twenty silver coins. Would you like to auction off the magic swords?”

“... Twenty all at once sounds like it would collapse the price doesn't it. Let's go with ten. I'll sell nine to the guild for two gold coins each, so please sell them later. Ah, could I get it in cash if possible?”

That would be eighteen gold, and adding the auction's sales to that it would probably become close to forty gold.

... It was probably a small amount relative to his twenty-three hundred gold debt, but it could be thought of as an income of forty million yen. From

Wataru's viewpoint, it wasn't too bad thinking about it like that.

For that night he would be having a drinking bout with Kantra and the others, so he decided to return to the empire the next day.

The details of the drinking bout will be omitted. It was good alcohol, none was left over by the end.

"Alright, now to greet Rokuko-san and them."

He headed to the inn's reception... Sitting there was the mage girl that he'd gotten on good terms with, Nerune.

"Whaaaa~, you're already returning~!? Uuu, I wanted to ask more about magic~"

Hahaha, I'll come again. Is Rokuko-san here?"

"Ah, yes~. I'll get her~"

Nerune went to go get Rokuko, so he waited for a while. And then Rokuko arrived in high spirits.

"You're going back? Say hi to Ane-sama for me."

"Alright, well, was I able to help?"

"Nn, yeah! Thanks to you I'll get a ring from my partner!"

There was a certain pact between Wataru and Rokuko. That is, when Wataru wanted Rokuko to become his partner, some things were said.

~ ~ ~

[... Would you be my partner?]

[Eh, no way. I already have a partner.]

From Rokuko's reaction, Wataru noticed that his question could have been taken as a confession.

He quickly corrected that.

[... Ah! No, sorry. I meant as in a study partner. Not the meaning as in a couple or lover or anything.]

[... Un? That so? Well okay.]

[Please become my cooperator in researching returning to Japan! Those

clothes, I just noticed them now, but they have nylon in them right!?)

[Nayon? What's that?]

[It's synthetic material made from petroleum! ... This world hasn't ever seen the combination of nylon with cloth, so why...!?)

[Ah, this dress? My partner obtained it from the dungeon you know. Fufun, isn't it wonderful?]

Right, the Hero Wataru saw through the looks of the material as something that existed in Japan with his insight. His eyes moved instinctively, but his reaction was only towards the nylon cloth. It definitely wasn't like he wanted to look at Rokuko's bottom. He just only looked at her bottom since her hair was blocking the rest.

[Yeah, it suits you well... Hmmm, I wonder if I could get some nylon cloth too? I heard the rumors, but it's amazing... I'd also like Rokuko-san's Partner-san to become my research companion. Is he an excellent adventurer after all?]

[... Yeah, he is, he's the person to have gone the deepest into the dungeon after all. He got a massage chair from the dungeon too.]

[Ooh, that's...!]

He wanted to take it apart and look inside. When he saw it—

[No way. It's valuable.]

Rokuko stopped it. He seemed to have voiced his desire.

[Mumu, then maybe your Partner-san could teach me about the dungeon... maybe I could hear something about it?]

[Nnn, right. I'm fine preparing a place to talk, but there needs to be an advantage for me!]

[Hmm, then how about I treat you to a meal? The five gold coin one.]

[It's my goods, I could eat it whenever I want even if I weren't treated to it.]

'Oh right~,' Wataru thought. He wondered if there wasn't some kind of bargaining chip he could use against this person he'd just met. He couldn't think of anything.

[... Then, maybe there are some of Rokuko-san's worries I could deal with?]

[Worries? Hmm, I can't think of any...]

[Umm, maybe some problem with your daily life with your partner?]

Wataru spoke in desperation, but Rokuko happened to think of something.

[Right, then I want to get on better terms with my partner so be my stalking horse!] [1]

[It'll definitely lure him out for a meal if I say that Hero-sama confessed to me!]

[Eh, w-what!?!]

[I'll go tell him then!]

~ ~ ~

... And that is what was said.

As a result of Wataru confessing to Rokuko, a few days ago he'd told them about his unrequited love story. He ended by futilely trying to indirectly appeal with, [Because I distrust women, I really can't confess to women], but in the end he was cautious of him and wasn't able to hear anything satisfactory.

"... But now I have a twenty-three hundred gold coin debt."

"Eh? That has nothing to do with me you know?"

"... Yeah."

Rokuko was definitely unrelated to it. Even if Narikin zeroing in on him was due to confessing to Rokuko, Kehma was another person so it was something else entirely.

"Ah, It's fine if you pay your debt through Haku Ane-sama you know?"

"I want to see Nerune-san and Gozoh-san and them, so I'll come back. I can't trouble Haku-sama with that."

'Even though it's good if you don't really come back,' Rokuko muttered.

"Well then, see you."

"Say hello to Haku Ane-sama."

And thus, Hero Wataru left for the imperial capital.

Furthermore, he honestly reported the details to Haku, so she decided that he would be sent to work practically till the point of death despite being an S-Rank adventurer, but that was another story.

Chapter 106 - Meat's Name and Making the Ring

In the end, it appears that it was decided that [Cave of Desires] was a derivation from [Flame Cavern] through Hero Wataru's report.

Before heading to Wakoku, he'll be returning to the imperial capital for a while to do several jobs in order to pay back his debt.

Taking the occasion to gather, he made a promise with Gozoh and Roppu to go to Wakoku together with them.

[No more drinking until I repay my debt!]

He said that, but can he really keep it up...? Definitely something to worry about.

Then again, Haku-san would probably just shoulder his debt if he's late on payments so it's no problem for us really.

"Weeell, the hero's heading back, looks like we can go back to being carefree."

"Kehma, even without the hero here you shouldn't be that carefree..."

I looked away from Rokuko's remark... right, come to think of it I have to give Meat a new name huh. I just remembered.

It was a good time for it, so I had brought her to the room and was using her as a hug pillow.

"Meat. Your name."

"I-it's fine as is. I-I'll become a good Meat so..."

When I said 'name', Meat trembled like a puppy that someone was trying to take their important blanket from.

“... Right, I’ll think about that in at least five years. So for now let’s think of a name.” [1]

“Heeey, what’s ‘Meat’ mean anyways? I missed the chance to ask...”

Aah, I was going to explain it to Rokuko just there, but I’m finding myself at a loss for words.

... I can’t say something like it means sex toy. That’d definitely be hard to say to this person that knows nothing.

And so, I decided that I didn’t hear her.

“Your new name is Meat Blackdog. I’ll call you Black outside. Sound good?”

When I said that, Meat was surprised that I’d be leaving ‘Meat’ as her name, so she blinked her eyes.

In the end, I decided for it to be Blackdog since she is a black dog. It has the feeling that she’ll be proud of her black hair-ness. I’m definitely not cutting corners here. Definitely not.

... I’d asked Ichika concerning what to name her, but beastkin really do place an extreme importance on their name, to the point that it seems more so than their life. The story is that once they learn their name, it will stick with them for life no matter what’s said and done. Hearing countless examples—to the extent that schoolkids would seriously say things like ‘Will you stake your life on it?’—I got the impression that trying to change it was no good.

In short, [It’s useless even if I changed it, I wouldn’t know what would happen even if I tried to forcibly do it. Or rather, it’s already too late. Like a field mine laid years ago.] I decided to postpone purposely blowing up the bomb.

Well, when it comes to having a name that describes her precisely, even if it’s by instinct, ‘Blackdog’ should be more or less satisfying for her... Yeah. I’m not cutting corners at all. I’m being serious. Serious I said!

... I just hope that Meat doesn’t explode until she’s an adult at least.

“So, let’s go to the guild to try and register your new name tomorrow... It should take some money, but it’s no problem. Even if it took gold coins. Understand?”

“Y-yes—”

Meat answered while gladly wagging her tail back and forth.

“Heeey, so what does ‘Meat’ mean?”

“... Ask Ichika.”

I decided to leave it to Ichika to explain it to Rokuko.

Even though we were changing Meat’s registered name with the guild, it took thirty silver coins. We were able to easily go through the procedures at the branch office though.

It was cheaper than I thought it’d be.

*

Since Rokuko had deepened her friendship with Redra while I was sleeping, I thought of something.

When I sleep so much, it feels like I’m useless.

Well, even so I don’t really mind and could just keep sleeping, but doesn’t it feel like I’m just a mascot? I don’t want to be put in the mascot box! I don’t want to be the mascot with a bad expression that gets caught between two futons like some dorayaki! [2]

Thus, even though I don’t really want to I decided that I would do some work. To speak accurately, I would make more magic sword blade golems. They’re something that only I can make after all.

“Oh iron, become a magic sword, [Create Golem]—ah.”

I made a blade golem with a considerably suitable chant. The magical power consumption is curbed remarkably compared to not using a chant... I don’t really need to bother though since it’s not like I’ll run out of magical power though. Even though I definitely remember feeling fatigued back when I first used the life magic [Cleanup]... wonder if it’s something like growing up? For now let’s resupply the [Treasure Chests] and make the same kind of magic swords the hero took.

As for what these [Treasure Chests] are, they are boxes that replenish the items in them after a certain period of time. At a cost of 100 DP.

Other than having them use DP to resupply by choosing from a list if you let it happen automatically, you can also replenish them with items chosen

beforehand.

Haku-san said that it's a popular item among dungeon masters that find restocking to be troublesome.

I'd like to make more powerful magic swords—err, golems, but I don't have a good way to... Even our most powerful piece, the iron golem, turned out to be useless and got sliced up by the hero.

Although the hero that came this time was relatively friendly, there might be a day that a hero fully intending to crush the dungeon core comes.

It's probably best to upgrade its materials after thinking about it, so I took a look at the raw materials I could get with DP.

... Oh, come to think of it I promised Rokuko a ring huh. Let's make it before I forget.

It should need just about as much needed to make a coin, so it shouldn't cost too much.

And so I bought [Orichalcum (1 MM Diameter, 10 CM Length: 10,000 DP)].

Suddenly expensive! But it can't be helped, it looks great!

Orichalcum has a golden tint with a silvery sheen, with a slightly rainbow-colored luster. It really does feel like a fantasy metal.

It's extremely expensive even though it's just ten centimeters, and in addition I couldn't bend it even though I tried to with everything I had. Even when I used pliers, it didn't look like it was even near yielding at all. The heck is this, is it really a metal?

For the time being I started processing it with [Create Golem] but... it consumed a considerable amount of time and magical power even though I was just turning ten centimeters of it into the shape of a ring. This is the first time in a while I've felt tired from using magical power, it took everything I had even though I properly used a chant. In this case I was able to shape it how I wanted even better than iron by filling it with enough of my magical power, but normally how would someone turn this into a sword?

I took another look at the orichalcum loop... It cost enough DP to use up ten gold coins, how luxurious. Isn't this a ten million yen ring? It might have been better to quietly make it out of money.

Next, I purchased [Synthetic Ruby (Unprocessed Boule: 30 DP)]. It's really

cheap compared to the orichalcum. Moreover a huge gem the size of a finger came out... what the heck's a boule? [3]

I thought about using a tiny natural gem, but like this the synthetic ruby is cheaper and has a much better color to it. Moreover since it's synthetic it barely has anything inside it (impurities), so in a meaning it could be called even more pure than a true ruby.

It'd probably be deemed heresy from a jeweler's point of view though. At any rate, I have no relation to it's composition since I'll be kneading and kneading it with [Create Golem]... Oh, it's really easy to do. It feels like my magical power just sticks to it.

Well, I wrapped the orichalcum loop in the ruby... There's a lot of ruby left over, maybe I'll make some hair ornaments?

At any rate, I made an orichalcum ring with a ruby coating. The orichalcum shined inside the transparent ruby's red brilliance. It's a simple design, but it suits Rokuko.

Let's make a box that suits it... Ah, handing her this will be a bit embarrassing...

I was able to make the ring, so let's think about how to power-up the dungeon again.

I thought about it when I was touching the orichalcum, but wouldn't it already be the strongest if I made an orichalcum golem where its whole body is orichalcum?

Let's ignore how much DP that would take. A little wire was 10,000, so the amount needed for a full golem might be ridiculous. And then it'd be a story of magical power too.

... How do people usually process orichalcum?

Chapter 107 - Presenting the Ring to Rokuko

Presenting a ring, I know it turns into a flag where you can't give it to them if you don't do it immediately.

That's why I decided to do it immediately, even though I'm embarrassed.

It's not like I should purposely call her to hand it to her... or something is what I thought, but it's no good. I should call her to hand it to her.

Because that's how it is, there's no options other than handing it to her, so I called her over saying, 'I'm going to give you the promised thing. Please come to my room.'

"Kehma! I'm here!"

She came three seconds later. Quick.

If she had a tail it'd probably be wagging right now.

With a rustling sound, I—

"Well, Rokuko. Here it is."

"A box? ... Ah! Can I open it!?"

"Yeah."

As soon as I said that, Rokuko quickly took out the ring.

"Ooh... a red jewel? It's see-through and really pretty. There's something glittering inside it too!"

And then she immediately tried to put it on her finger—then stopped.

... Then, she took a few brief glances at me... What? Me? Any more service is beyond what you should expect, I only handed it to you. It's too embarrassing.

"... Kehma. I heard it from the hero, but it looks like usually your partner puts

your ring on for you at times like this you know? W-will you?"

She's... pleading me...? Grah, alright, I'll do it.

When I accepted the ring back from Rokuko, I quickly took Rokuko's left hand and took aim.

... When I took a look at Rokuko's face, she was practically glaring at the ring from nervousness.

Now, while thinking about how Haku-san was going to kill me later, I put it on Rokuko's ring finger... it's loose. It's natural considering I didn't measure her size after all~

But I anticipated that. I could use [Create Golem].

Rather, since I expected that I'd have to adjust it from the beginning, I made it so that it would be loose. That way it wouldn't be a problem to put it on.

Rokuko, while feeling the ring with her right hand, spun it round and round.

"Muu, it's loose isn't it... right!"

"Nn?"

Just when I was about to use [Create Golem], kashiin! Rokuko started to shine.

When the light calmed down, instead of Rokuko being there there was an adult that looked like Rokuko, a blonde-haired girl.

And on the ring finger of her left hand, there was the red ring that I made. It fit precisely.

Who're yo—... no, Rokuko? Normally thinking it couldn't be anyone but Rokuko, no, normally thinking no one could just grow up instantly though huh. Dungeon cores really aren't normal though.

"If the ring is loose, I just have to grow! Ehehe, it's perfect. So, does it suit me?"

"Y-yeah... Rokuko, right?"

"Un? What wrong Kehma, charmed by me? Mufufu."

Rokuko smiled and stuck her chest out. Things that looked like meat buns jiggled.

Her outward age obviously increased. If her old self was a grade-schooler, she's

now a high school student. High school students these days sure do grow up fast huh, hahaha.

... I seem to have been attracted towards her legs unconsciously, so I desperately tried to look away. It'd be dangerous if Rokuko didn't have shoes on.

"... Umm? Rokuko, what's with your appearance?"

"Oh, come to think of it this is the first time I've showed Kehma isn't it? How is it?"

Rokuko twirled in a circle to show off, then over enthusiastically fell over. Even her shoes flew off.

"Ow~. I lost my balance from growing so suddenly~"

"Oi oi, be careful."

I sat back down.

OK, let's settle down. Those white things or that place, I saw various things that I shouldn't see... Kuh, those white knee socks are so attractive! I looked unintentionally! Don't turn your feet towards me, my heart can't take it! However, I must not look. With those amazing legs and her age isn't a problem either, I might carelessly fall in love.

I can easily imagine being slaughtered by Haku-san in the future, so I have to desperately endure.

"R-Rokuko, can you turn back?"

"Un, I can! I mean, this appearance takes a bit of DP to maintain you know~"

"Alright, please return for now. I still don't want to die."

"Eh!? Kehma will die when I'm like this!? Got it I'll turn back immediately... I turned back!"

I glanced at her. She's turned back into a proper loli.

Phew, that was close...

"Alright, I'll adjust the ring's size... wait, huh?"

"Nn? Ah, it fits now!"

Rokuko spoke while putting her shoes back on. When I looked at the ring on her left hand, the ring that should have been loose fit as well on Rokuko(loli) as it did on Rokuko(big).

... Rokuko's clothes, shoes, and even her knee socks adjusted to Rokuko(big)'s size, come to think of it. Wait, didn't those shoes come off a moment ago? Eh? They adjust even if they're taken off?

Alright, let's not think into this too deeply. There's the possibility that it won't adjust anymore if I recognize it as breaking the law of conservation of mass.

Rokuko looked at the ring on her finger as though spellbound.

"Ehehe, this jewel is pretty. It's red and see-through and beautiful."

"Yeah. I have confidence in it."

She looked really happy, looking at it from various angles while twisting it around her finger.

I also finally calmed down. Seriously, my heart was pounding...

"The twinkling thing in this gem, what is it?"

"It's orichalcum."

"Heeeh, orichalcum... isn't orichalcum super rare?"

"This much cost 10,000 DP."

"He~h.... so this much cost ten Kehma huh..."

Oi, don't turn me into a unit. Like that Feni would be above me.

"Ehehe♪"

"Well, most importantly it looks like you like it."

"Un, thank you Kehma! Love you!"

Two seconds after she said that, Rokuko's face blushed. Looks like she noticed what she just said.

Then she ran out, saying something like, 'I-I'm going to go show Meat!'

... Even if it was a mistake, it was pretty cute.

No, that's all. It's just that I'm happy she was happy from my present, that's all...!